

NORTH AMERICAN TOMATO TRADE WORK GROUP
CANADA – MEXICO – UNITED STATES

David Priester
Head, Standardization Section
AMS, Fruit & Vegetable Programs
Fresh Products Branch
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 1661 – S
Washington D.C.
20250-0240

February 26, 2004

By Facsimile – (202) 720-2185
By Email – david.priester@usda.gov

Dear Mr. Priester,

Re: Review of United States Standards for Grades of Greenhouse Tomatoes

Thank- you for attending the annual general meeting of the of the North American Tomato Trade Working Group (“NATTWG”) in Mexico on February 10th 2004, and the meeting of the Greenhouse Tomato Sub-Committee of NATTWG the following day.

As you are aware, the NATTWG represents virtually all major tomato producer organizations in the United States, Canada and Mexico that are involved in the production of tomatoes produced and marketed into the U.S. marketplace.

During our meetings we had an opportunity to discuss the proposal by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to review and revise the grade standards for greenhouse tomatoes marketed within the U.S. Our organization is in support of this review and would propose that the review be limited to loose round tomatoes, with the addition of a new subsection for tomatoes customarily referred to as large vine tomatoes (“TOV”). We also propose that the all specialty tomatoes, including “small TOV” be exempted from any new proposed grade standards due to the difficulty in establishing grade standards for the many different varieties, corresponding characteristics and sizes, existing within this very specialized sub category.

In addition to our support for this review, we would also like to participate with your department in establishing these new standards. Our organization has selected members from each country who specialize in the production and marketing of greenhouse tomatoes and who have agreed to participate in your review. These individuals would bring invaluable expertise to the review process. I have attached the names and contact information of the members who have agreed to participate.

Should you require any additional information or participation from our industry, please contact me directly at 604-940-0188 or at murray@bcveg.com. We look forward to working with the USDA and participating in this review.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Murray Driediger', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Murray Driediger
Chair, NATTWG

c.c. NATTWG Member Organizations
Robin Chilton, UDSA AMS
Rene Cardinal, CFIA
Brian Tate, CFIA
Helen Zohar-Picciano, CFIA

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Committee for the Review of United States Standards for Grades of Greenhouse
Tomatoes Members

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